MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER
Lu.“Altan Tobchi” : Golden History written in 1651
(Mongolia)

PART A – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

1 SUMMARY

Lu.“Altan Tobchi” – Golden History was written with a bamboo pen on muutuu paper in black ink in Mongolian vertical script. This manuscript presents the history of Mongolia and neighbouring countries from Chinggis Khan to Ligden Khan (from 13th to 17th centuries).

The greatest merit of Lubsandanzan as a historian is derived from the fact that he restored old Mongolian Historiographic traditions, successfully using sources of the 13th century, particularly “the Secret History of the Mongols”. Scholars have proven that 233 of the 282 paragraphs of the “Secret History” are incorporated into the Lu.“Altan Tobchi”. It may be said that this Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the most ancient surviving example of the primary Mongolian source editions of the “Secret History” and 17th century reproduction of this history. Once has to say that for its second birth the “Secret History” was obligated first of all to Luvsandanzan.

2 DETAILS OF THE NOMINATOR

2.1 Name (person or organisation)
Gotov AKIM
Norov URTNASAN

2.2 Relationship to the documentary heritage nominated
Head of the Mongolian National Committee for Memory of the World Program

2.3 Contact person(s)
Norov URTNASAN
Secretary - General of the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO,
Chairperson of the Mongolian National Committee for Memory of the World Program
Member of the Mongolian National Committee for World Heritage

2.4 Contact details (include address, phone, fax, email)
Address: Government building XI
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Fax: (976)-11-315652

E-mail: mon.unesco@mongol.net
3 IDENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

- **Lu.“Altan Tobchi”** – Golden History written in 1651
- Location. National Library of Mongolia
  Ulaanbaatar - 210648, Chinggis avenue - 4
  Fax: 976-11-323100,
  Tel: 976-11-323100,

3.2 Description

**AUTHOR:** Luvsandanzan

**DATE OF CREATION:** 1651

**SIZE:** length: 61,4 cm width: 19 cm pages : 178

**MATERIAL:** written in black ink on paper

**DESCRIPTION:** Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the only surviving handwritten original manuscript in Mongolian vertical script. This manuscript was written with a bamboo pen on mutuutu paper in black ink in Mongolian vertical script. This manuscript presents the history of Mongolia and neighbouring countries from Chinggis Khan to Ligden Khan (from 13th to 17th centuries).

The greatest merit of Luvsandanzan as a historian comes down to the fact that he restored old Mongolian Historigraphic traditions, successfully using sources of the 13th century, particularly “the Secret History of the Mongols”. Scholars have proven that 233 of the 282 paragraphs of the “Secret History” are incorporated into the Lu.“Altan Tovch”. It may be said that this Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the most ancient surviving example of the primary Mongolian source editions of the “Secret History” and 17th century reproduction of this history. Once has to say that for its second birth the “Secret History” was obligated first of all to Luvsandanzan.

A precious and rare handwriting sutra well-known by the name Lu.“Altan Tobchi” (The Golden History) by Luvsandanzan was obtained by Jamyan Onhud (1864-1930), the first Chief of the Institute for Script and Sutras, from Dar Yunhseebu the Nobleman from Bayantumen khoshhu (county) of Khan Khentii province.

Jamyan formally informed and registered his acquisition of such a rare script to the Institute for Script and Sutras fund. In order to study the script thoroughly, he made a handwriting copy of the script himself and he didn’t only keep the original version while studying, but also sent the copied version to the French Mongolist Mr. Pellio.P for deeper research. And since 1946, the script has been kept in the French National Library. Then a prominent Australian Mongolist I De Rakhevilts photographed and researched it.

Then the original manuscript of the Lu.“Altan Tobchi” was sent to the Institute for Eastern Study in USSR in 1932 and got photographed there. Today, this version is in the Script Fonds of the Institute for Eastern Study in Saint-Petersburg and has been studied by the outstanding scholars, such as Tseveen Jamsrangyn, Poppe.N and Kazak’yevich and others.
In 1937, the **Lu. “Altan Tobchi”** was published from manuscript in 2 volumes which was a great step in supporting international and domestic scholars to study the book which increased the number of its scholars dramatically. Since then, it has been studied in diverse periods and in various places.

Mongolist Soviet scholar N.P.Shastina, published the Golden Annual in Russian with commentaries and research article in 1979, while Mongolists such as Inner Mongolian scholar Choiji published it in the old Mongolian vertical script in Khukh Khot in 1984. The **Lu. “Altan Tobchi”** published by Ts.Shagdar for the second time in 1990 and Prof. Sh. Bira and others published it in sutra-like format.

REGISTRATION NUMBER: XÔ – 426

**REFEREES.**

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http://www.nationallibrary.mn

4 **JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION/ ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

4.1 **Is authenticity established?**

A precious and rare handwriting sutra well-known by the name **Lu. “Altan Tobchi” (The Golden History)** by Luvsandanzan was obtained by Jamyan Onhudyn the Earl (1864-1930), the first Chief of the Institute for Script and Sutras, from Dari Yunhseebu the Nobleman from Bayantumen khoshuu (county) of Khan Khentii province.
Jamyan the Earl formally informed and got registered his acquisition of this rare script to the Institute for Script and Sutras fund. In order to study the script thoroughly, he made a handwriting copy of the script himself and he didn’t only keep the original version while studying, but also sent the copied version to the French Mongolist Mr. Pellio.P for deeper research. And since 1946, the script has been kept in the French National Library. Then a prominent Australian Mongolist I De Rakhevilts photographed and researched it.

Then the original manuscript of the Lu.“Altan Tobchi” was sent to the Institute for Eastern Study in USSR in 1932 and got photographed there. Today, this photographed version is in the Script Fund of Institute for Eastern Study in Saint-Petersburg and has been studied by the outstanding scholars, such as Tseveen Jamsrangyn, Poppe.N and Kazak’yevich and others.

In 1937, the Lu.“Altan Tobchi” was published from manuscript in 2 volumes and it was a great step in supporting international and domestic scholars to study the book while increasing the number of its scholars dramatically. Since then, it has been studied in diverse periods and in various places.

All scholars regarded and assessed the handwriting sutra written in ink in old Mongolian vertical Script with bamboo pen on a paper sized 19x63 cm, paged with 352, as the one and authentic original source.

Hence, by the request of some scholars and experts, Academician Sh.Bira prepared a preface for the original version and published that as photographic sutra version, dedicated to the 750th anniversary of Secret History of the Mongols, which extended the availability of the book study and research excessively.

4.2 Is world significance, uniqueness and irreplaceability established?

This Sutra, written in 1651, presents the history of Mongolia and neighbouring countries from periods of Chenggis Khan to Ligden Khan’s.

The greatest merit of Lubsandanzan as historian is derived from his retoration of old Mongolian Historigraphic traditions, successfully using sources of the 13th century, particularly “the Secret History of the Mongols”. Scholars have proven that 233 of the 282 paragraphs of the “Secret History” are incorporated into the Lu.“Altan Tovch”. It may be said that this Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the most ancient surviving example of the primary Mongolian source editions of the “Secret History” and 17th century reproduction of this history. Once has to say that for its second birth the “Secret History” was obligated first of all to Luvsandanzan.

The “Secret History of the Mongols” is a grand epic historical monument of Mongolian History. It is a documentary heritage and work of great literary merit. We, new generations of today’s world are left with the equivalent of a vivid album of the evidence of one important and fascinating part of the world History: the story of Mongol origins, the rise of Chinggis, the unification of the Mongol Tribes and beginning of Mongol Empire. This was possible due to only the existence of the “Secret History” as the sole existing primary source from 13th and 14th century of Chinggis’s time and its reproduction – Lu.“Altan Tobchi”.

On the 750th anniversary of the appearance of the “Secret History of the Mongols” UNESCO honoured the work by citing it as “great monument of eastern history and literature, unique in history by its rich literary language and artistic aesthetics” and decreed that translations of it should be made around the world.
Unfortunately no original version written in Mongolian characters of the “Secret History” has survived to the present day. Chinese bibliophiles of 14th century transcribed the “Secret History” from the original Mongol text, which has not survived, to Chinese characters and made verbatim and abridged translations.

Furthermore, Lu.“Altan Tobchi” also contains an additional quantity of information about Mongolia, Central Asia and China in 12th and 13th centuries which are not presented in the “Secret History”.

In conclusion, it should be stressed out that what is beyond doubt is the fact that the manuscript Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is a historical and literary documentary heritage of world importance and global significance.

In such case, disappearance or deterioration of this Mongolian manuscript Lu.“Altan Tobchi” will constitute irreplaceable impoverishment not only of the history of Mongols but of the rest of the world, especially the history of Central Asia, China and Russia, because the Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the only surviving manuscript on Mongolia.

4.3 Is one or more of the criteria of (a) time (b) place (c) people (d) subject and theme (e) form and style (f) social, spiritual and community significance satisfied?

(a) time

Lu.“Altan Tobchi” as mentioned above, was written in 1651 but it reproduces 233 out of the 282 articles from the “Secret History of the Mongols” which reveals significant historical events that took place in Mongolia and Central Asia during the 13th and 14th centuries. During this time, as shown through stories about the life and deeds of Chinggis Khan in the Lu.“Altan Tobchi”, the unified Mongol state was founded under Chinggis Khan which soon became the Great Empire.

The military campaigns of Chinggis Khan and his successors, despite the widely held belief about their destructive and militant character, nevertheless had amazing long-lasting social and political consequences that endured through the centuries and continue today. These consequences, in many cases, had changed at least the course of history of Euro-Asia.

(b) place

This documentary heritage indeed contains crucial information about a locality important in world history and culture. The Lu.“Altan Tobchi” displays not only a remarkable accurate knowledge of the geography of Mongolia itself but also contains fairly realistic information on foreign countries, towns, lakes, rivers, mountains and people which can be matched on a modern map. One example is the ancient Kharakhorum city. One of the Great events in history of the Mongol state was the foundation of the capital city of Mongolia – Kharakhorum by Chinggis Khan in the fifteenth year of his reign, i.e in 1220.

Soon Kharakhorum became a meeting place of different people, cultures and religions. The city was linked with different countries of the world by the wide network of Mongol urtege (communication /post stations) system which was first set up in 1234 by the Great Ugudei Khan. Embassies from all over the world including European kingdoms and the papacy, undertook the long voyage to the capital city of Kharakhorum. Among these, Friar William of Rubruck who visited Kharakhorum was greatly impressed by Khan’s Palace and
large tree at its entrance made of silver by master William of Paris. He writes that there were also twelve Buddhist temples, two mosques and one Christian church.

(c) people

The geographical position of Mongolia in the heartland of Central Asia was the main environmental factor that determined the specific character of historical and cultural development of its inhabitants.

From ancient times, Mongol nomads and their ancestors migrated across the expansive steppe of Central Asia creating culture recognized and known to the world as “nomadic civilization”. The Lu.“Altan Tobchi” represents and bears an exceptional testimony to a specific nomadic tradition of Mongols that still exists.

Not only does it recount the genealogy of the early Mongol Khans and life times and deeds of Chinggis Khan, founder of the unified Mongol state and prime initiator of the creation of the Mongol Empire which had become the largest continuous land empire that had ever existed in the world. It also paints a vivid and accurate picture of the nomadic Mongol way of life and provides rich source material for an understanding of Mongol society, Central Asian and Chinese people during the 13th and 17th centuries. This documentary heritage vividly reveals the philosophical outlook, belief systems, worldview, language, religion, culture, customs and traditions of nomadic Mongol people. It also contains rich information about life and culture of the Nations of Central Asia – the Uigur, Kirghyz, Turkish, Tajik, Uzbek people and people of Russia and China.

Mongol nomadic culture undoubtedly influenced societies across Asia and into Europe and in turn absorbed influence from both East and West in a true interchange of human values. This culture is still revered and is indeed an important part of Mongolian society and is highly respected as “noble” way to live in harmony with environment.

Recognizing the richness of nomadic civilization and its important contribution to promoting dialogue and interaction among all forms of civilization, the United Nations General Assembly at its 60th session (2005) adopted a resolution celebrating the 800 years of Mongolian Statehood and welcoming the efforts undertaken by the Government of Mongolia in this regard.

In 2003, UNESCO inscribed the Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape on the World Heritage List as the cradle of Central Asia’s unique Nomadic cultures. Inscription on this list confirms the exceptional and universal value of this and natural site which requires protection for the benefit of all humanity.

Home for centuries to the major political, trade, cultural and religious centers of successive nomadic empires, the Orkhon Valley served as a crossroads of civilizations, linking East and West. It is also the historic site of Kharakhrum – grand capital of the vast Mongol Empire established by Chinggis Khan. As a Unique testimony to Central Asian and World history, the OVCL is a outstanding Heritage site belonging to the Cultural Heritage of humanity.

(c) subject and theme

The subject and theme of the Lu.“Altan Tobchi” wholly represent particular historical and social developments that affected considerable part of the world history during the 13th and 14th centuries. The subject matter and theme already have been considered in the above going sections.

4.4 Are there issues of rarity, integrity, threat and management that relate to this nomination?
**Rarity:** Lu."Altan Tobchi" (Golden History) was written by bamboo pen on muutuu paper with black ink in Mongolian vertical script. This Sutra presents the history of Mongolia and neighbour countries from Chinggis Khan to Ligden Khan (from 13\textsuperscript{th} to 17\textsuperscript{th} century).

The greatest merit of Lubsandanzan as historian comes down to the fact that he restored old Mongolian Historigraphic traditions, successfully using sources of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century, particularly “the Secret History of the Mongols”. Scholars have proven that 233 of the 282 paragraphs of the “Secret History” are incorporated into the Lu."Altan Tobchi”. It may be said that this Lu."Altan Tobchi" is the most ancient surviving example of the primary Mongolian source editions of the “Secret History” and 17\textsuperscript{th} century reproduction of this history. Once has to say that for its second birth the “Secret History” was obligated first of all to Luvsandanzan.

**Integrity:** This Mongolian manuscript is complete and has not been altered.

**Threat:** Damages:
- The upper left corner is chipped
- The surroundings of the pages No.2-5 are chipped and broken
- The left parts of the pages No. 84, 85, 86.
- The upper left corner of the page No.107 is torn

The Library does not have dedicated facilities for filtering the air, controlling humidity and temperature. Lighting and electrical facilities are inadequate to the “Requirements for the protection and conservation of the heritage objects in the archives and libraries” MNS ISO 11799:2007.

5 **LEGAL INFORMATION**

5.1 **Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)**

National Library of Mongolia  
Ulaanbaatar - 210648 , Chinggis avenue - 4  
Fax : 976-11-323100,  
Tel : 976-11-323100,  
http//www.nationallibrary.mn

5.2 **Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details, if different to owner)**

National Library of Mongolia  
Ulaanbaatar - 210648 , Chinggis avenue - 4  
Fax : 976-11-323100,  
Tel : 976-11-323100,  
http//www.nationallibrary.mn

5.3 **Legal status:**

(a) **Category of ownership**

The National Library of Mongolia owns, which is a State Service Authority.

(b) **Accessibility**
It is available to use in accordance with the below clauses on Law for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage of Mongolia:

- “To be used for the dedication of advertisement, research and investigation and training”
- “Prohibited for the dedication of original usage”
- In compliance with the clause No.3 of the Law on Relationship between the State and the Temples, “The Government shall determine the issues offered by the State authority responsible to the culture and science regarding the peerlessly valuable cultural and historical heritage object in the library for the usage of religious and ritual activities”
- “The Government shall determine the regulation on the issues related to copying, making souvenir objects with the model, photographing, video recording, preparing stamps, greeting cards and CDs by using historical and cultural objects”
- “The State authority responsible to culture and science, or competent authority permitted by the state authority can involve the registered cultural heritage temporarily to the international and domestic exhibitions, based on the agreement with the heritage owner”

(c) Copyright status

The National Library of Mongolia

(d) Responsible administration

The National Library of Mongolia is responsible for the documentary heritage and keeps it in the special fonds of priceless and rare books.

(d) Other factors

Scholars proved that 282 paragraphs of the “Secret History”, 233 are incorporated into the Lu.“Altan Tobchi”. It is maybe said that this Lu.“Altan Tobchi” is the most ancient surviving example of the primary Mongolian source editions of the “Secret History” and 17th century reproduction rather than copy of this history which is why it is vitally necessary to register this magnificent historical creation as world cultural heritage, as well as safeguard and protect, restore it for posterity.

6 MANAGEMENT PLAN

6.1 Is there a management plan in existence for this documentary heritage? YES/NO

Within the framework of the implementation of Government platform of Mongolia, and the package of laws of the Culture of Mongolia, activities are conducted under the plan to register and itemize cultural scriptural heritage, as well as to improve protection and conservation.

In accordance with the Law for the safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage, some significantly precious creations such as Lu.“Altan Tobchi”, Mongol Shunkhan Danjuur, Yesun Erdeniin Ganjuur, Sanduin Juj were registered and certified as “Outstanding valuable property” of Cultural Heritage of Mongolia.
Within the implementation of the package of laws of the Culture of Mongolia, and in compliance with the Governmental Act No.23 ratified in 2003 and the “Regulation on the charged service to be observed for the usage by the organizations and individuals for copying, shooting, video recording, photographing, releasing CDs and making stamps”, “Regulation to be observed for reading the scripts, printed books and dissertations in the National Library of Mongolia ordered by the Director of the National Library of Mongolia” and based on the permission of the Director of National Library of Mongolia, we have been enabling people for copying, taking pictures and reading which is a practical action for the protection of the rare and precious books.

Management plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Implement projects on preservation and conservation condition of books and sutras. Equipments for adjusting the air dryness, fluctuation of hotness and coldness (air conditioner).</td>
<td>2005 - 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Implement digitalization project of Lu “Altan Tobchi”, other rare and valuable books and sutras at the National Library of Mongolia.</td>
<td>2005 - 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improve the equipment and professional level of the book restoration laboratory on preventing books and publications of being physically and mechanically damaged.</td>
<td>2007 - 2011</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Nominate some of Rare and Valuable Books to UNESCO programme “Memory of the World”.</td>
<td>2008 - 2010</td>
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7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Provide details of consultation about this nomination with

(a), (b) Consultation meeting held in National Library of Mongolia in 29th of December in 2008.

(c) Mongolian National Committee for Memory of the World Program consultation meeting held in National University of Mongolia on 23rd of December.

PART B – SUBSIDIARY INFORMATION

The National Library of Mongolia is responsible for the documentary heritage and keeps Lu “Altan Tobchi” in an area measuring 177.84 square metres where the special collection of priceless and rare books is kept in a safe showcase. This room is equipped with dedicated equipment like fire detection and alarm system but still needs other items such as air conditioning, humidity control material, standard lights and shelves.
There is no dedicated budget for the improvement of protection and conservation of rare and precious books.

Urgent measures must be taken in the near future to establish a reserve room in accordance with standard requirement MNS ISO 11799:2007

8 ASSESSMENT OF RISK

8.1 Detail the nature and scope of threats to this documentary heritage (see 5.5)

Due to the poor storage condition, there are more signs of decay appearing on the book, such as blackening and deteriorating from the edges, words and letters fading, and the painting exfoliating.

Since the handwritten sutras and books are made of organic materials, such as paper, textile, skin and hire which are processed in special ways, they are decaying and coming apart in various ways, due to the insects, fungus and other such negative factors.

There are no facilities for filtering the air, controlling humidity and room temperature, as well as the lighting and electrical facilities are inadequate to the “Requirements for the protection and conservation of the heritage objects in the archives and libraries” MNS ISO 11799:2007.

9 ASSESSMENT OF PRESERVATION

9.1 Detail the preservation context of the documentary heritage (see 3.3)

The storage condition of the Lu.“Altan Tobchi”:
One volume book paged with 178,
width: 18.8 cm,
length: 62.8 cm,
thickness: 4.7 cm,
length of the script: 49.2 cm,
width of the script: 14.4 cm,
weight: 2500 gm/

Damage:
- The upper left corner is chipped
- The surroundings of the pages No.2-5 are chipped and broken
- The left parts of the pages No. 84, 85, 86 are torn and damaged
- The upper left corner of the page No.107 is torn

History of preservation:
Onkhudyn Jamyan took it from nobleman Dari, who was originally from Yunsheebugu Tribe in order to preserve it at the library of Institute for Sutras and Scripts. Since then this sutra is preserved in Mongolian National Library of Mongolia.